REMARKS

In the Office Action dated October 23, 2001, claims 1-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over U.S. Patent No. 6,212,548 (DeSimone).

The Office Action does not indicate how DeSimone teaches the elements of each of the independent claims of the present application. Claim 1 recites a method of communicating in a network having a plurality of *communities each including a server*, with the method comprising:

- receiving, from the *server in a first community*, a request indicating a desired real-time, text-based messaging from a first terminal coupled to the first community server to a second terminal coupled to *the server in a second community*; and
- processing the request, by the *server in the second community*, to establish a real-time, text-based messaging session between the first and second terminals *through the first and second community servers*.

DeSimone does not teach or even remotely suggest the recited interaction between servers of different communities for establishing a real-time, text-based messaging between terminals coupled to the servers in the different communities.

Independent claim 9 recites a method of communicating in a system having a server that comprises receiving, at the server, a request to contact the user, accessing *predetermined information to determine a plurality of devices* that may be employed for communicating with the user, and sending a message to *at least one of the plurality of devices*. There is no indication anywhere within DeSimone of such acts. The Office Action does not even acknowledge the presence of the recited elements of claim 9.

Independent claim 14 is also distinguishable over DeSimone for the reason that DeSimone does not even remotely suggest a storage unit containing information identifying a plurality of devices that may be used to contact a user, and an interface unit adapted to send a message to at least one of the devices.

Similarly, with respect to independent claim 25, DeSimone fails to suggest instructions in a data signal that when executed cause a server to access predetermined information to determine a plurality of devices that may be employed for communicating with a user, and to send a message to at least one of the plurality devices.

With respect to independent claim 19, DeSimone fails to teach or suggest the elements of the recited server that are adapted to establish a text-based messaging session between communities associated with different service providers.

With respect to independent claim 20, there is no indication anywhere within DeSimone of an article containing instructions that when executed cause a system in a first community associated with a first service provider to receive a request from a subscriber in a second community associated with a second service provider and to perform other acts for establishing a text-based messaging session between subscribers in the different communities.

Independent claim 31 recites a server having an interface to receive a request from a first community associated with a first service provider to establish an interactive, text-based chat session between a first terminal in the first community and a second terminal in a second community. DeSimone is silent on the recited features.

For the foregoing reasons, all independent claims are allowable over the cited references. Dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as corresponding independent claims.

Allowance of all claims is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (NORT-0010-US).

Respectfully submitted,

Date

Dan C. Hu, Reg. No. 40,025
Trop, Pruner & Hu, P.C.
8554 Katy Freeway, Ste. 100
Houston, TX 77024
713/468-8880
713/468-8883 [fax]

CURRENT VERSION OF CLAIMS

New claims 32-42 are added. The original claims, presented below, are un-amended.

1. A method of communicating in a network having a plurality of communities each including a server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the server in a first community, a request indicating desired real-time, text-based messaging from a first terminal coupled to the first community server to a second terminal coupled to the server in a second community; and

processing the request, by the server in the second community, to establish a real-time, text-based messaging session between the first and second terminals through the first and second community servers.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining if the second terminal has an established link with the second community server.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising sending a notification to the second terminal of the desired messaging session if the second terminal has an established link with the second community server.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising receiving an indication from the second terminal of whether the desired messaging session has been accepted.

5. The method of claim 2, further comprising sending a message to a predetermined communications device other than the second terminal if the second terminal does not have an established connection with the second community server.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein sending the messages includes sending to a communications device including at least one of a telephone, a pager, and an electronic mail receiver.

7. The method of claim 2, further comprising performing a reverse log on to the second terminal if the second terminal does not have an established link with the second community server.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising establishing a chat session between the first and second terminals.

9. A method of communicating in a system having a server, comprising:

receiving, at the server, a request to contact a user;

accessing predetermined information to determine a plurality of devices that may be employed for communicating with the user; and

sending a message to at least one of the plurality of devices.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising storing the predetermined information listing a plurality of devices including a telephone and at least one other device.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein sending a message to the telephone includes sending it to a public switched telephone network.

12. The method of claim 10, further comprising converting a message into voice data to send to the telephone.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein the at least one other device is a non-voice device.

14. A system comprising:

a controller adapted to receive a request for establishing a messaging session with a user;

a storage unit containing information identifying a plurality of devices that may be used to contact the user; and

an interface unit adapted to send a message to at least one of the devices.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the information identifies a voice device and at least another device.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the voice device includes a telephone.

17. The system of claim 15, wherein the at least one other device includes a non-voice device.

18. The system of claim 15, further comprising a data-to-voice converter to convert data into voice.

19. A server for use in a communications system having a plurality of communities coupled by a network, each community associated with a different service provider, the server being associated with a first one of the communities and comprising:

an interface unit adapted to receive a contact request over the network from an entity associated with another community, the entity not logged on to the server, the contact request indicating a request to establish a text-based messaging session with a destination terminal linked to the server; and

a controller adapted to send a notification to the destination terminal of the contact request and to receive an indication from the destination terminal of acceptance of the contact request.

20. An article including one or more machine-readable storage media containing instructions for establishing a text-based messaging session between subscribers in a plurality of communities, each community associated with a different service provider, the instructions when executed causing a system in a first community associated with a first service provider to:

receive a request from a subscriber in a second community associated with a second service provider, the request indicating a desired text-based messaging session with a subscriber in the first community;

notify the subscriber in the first community of the request;

determine if the subscriber in the first community has accepted the request; and

establish the text-based messaging session between the subscribers if the subscriber in the first community accepted.

21. The article of claim 20, wherein the one or more storage media contain instructions that when executed cause the system to further send signaling to establish the text-based messaging session.

22. The article of claim 20, wherein the text-based messaging session includes a chat session.

23. The article of claim 20, wherein the one or more storage media contain instructions that when executed cause the system to create a controller object adapted to control the text-based messaging session.

24. The article of claim 20, wherein the one or more storage media contain instructions that when executed cause the system to:

receive a request from a subscriber in a third community associated with a third service provider for a text-based messaging session; and

establish the text-based messaging session among the subscribers in the first, second, and third communities.

25. A data signal embodied in a carrier wave comprising one or more code segments containing instructions for communicating in a network having a server, the instructions when executed causing the server to:

receive a request to contact a user;

access predetermined information to determine a plurality of devices that may be employed for communicating with the user; and

send a message to at least one of the plurality of devices.

27. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the request comprises receiving a request indicating a desired interactive, text-based chat session.

28. The server of claim 19, wherein the text-based messaging session comprises an interactive, text-based chat session.

29. The server of claim 19, wherein the controller is adapted to further send messaging to perform a reverse log-on procedure with the destination terminal.

30. The article of claim 20, wherein the instructions when executed cause the system to establish the text-based messaging session by establishing an interactive, text-based chat session.

31. A server for use in a communications system having a plurality of communities coupled by a network, each community associated with a different service provider, comprising:

an interface adapted to receive a request from a first community to establish an interactive, text-based chat session between a first terminal in the first community and a second terminal in a second community; and

a controller adapted to process the request on behalf of the second terminal in the second community to establish the interactive, text-based chat session.

32. (New) (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a web page for display at the first terminal, wherein receiving the request comprises receiving a message generated in response to a selection made in the web page.

33. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing a session object in the second community server,

wherein receiving the request comprises receiving a request at the session object in the second community server from another session object in the first community server; and

the session object in the second community server exchanging messaging with the first community server to establish the real-time, text-based messaging session.

34. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing a response, from the second community server, to the first terminal to present a web page in a web browser on the first terminal; and

receiving a text message of the real-time, text-based messaging session originated from the web browser on the first terminal.

35. (New) The server of claim 19, wherein the interface unit is adapted to receive the contact request from a second server in the other community.

36. (New) The server of claim 19, wherein the controller is adapted to communicate a web page for display on the entity,

the contact request comprising a message generated in response to user selection made in the web page at the entity.

37. (New) The server of claim 19, wherein the controller comprises a session object,

the session object adapted to exchange messaging with another session object in a second server in the other community to establish the text-based messaging session.

38. (New) The server of claim 19, wherein the controller is adapted to communicate a response to the contact request to present a web page in a web browser at the entity,

the interface unit adapted to further receive text messaging from the web browser at the entity during the text-based message session.

39. (New) The article of claim 20, wherein the instructions when executed cause the system to receive the request at a first server in the system from a second server in the second community.

40. (New) The article of claim 39, wherein the instructions when executed cause the system to provide a web page for display at a subscriber terminal in the second community,

wherein the request received at the first server comprises messaging generated in response to selection made in the web page displayed at the subscriber terminal in the second community.

41. (New) The article of claim 39, wherein the instructions when executed cause the system to:

provide a session object in the system; and

cause the session object to exchange messaging with the second server to establish the text-based messaging session.

42. (New) The article of claim 20, wherein the instructions when executed cause the system to:

communicate, in response to the request, a web page for display in a web browser at a subscriber terminal in the second community; and

receive messaging from the web browser during the text-based messaging session.